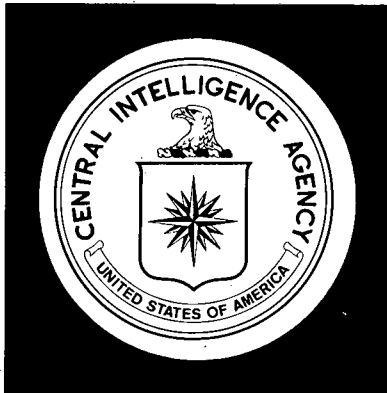




The President's Daily Brief

11 September 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

11 September 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Lao Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma's chances are good for gaining cabinet approval to sign the agreement with the Communists this Friday. (Page 1)

A North Vietnamese military recruitment campaign which began last month could provide some indication of Hanoi's intentions in South Vietnam for the next dry season, which runs from October to May. (Page 2)

In Chile, plans by navy officers to trigger military action against the Allende government [redacted] reportedly have the support of some key army units. (Page 3)

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The Soviet Union's Ryad program to develop a series of third-generation computers is at least three years behind schedule. (Page 4)

Notes on Iceland, China, and Norway appear on Page 5.

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LAOS

Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma has scheduled a cabinet meeting for today at which he intends to press for approval to sign the agreement with the Communists on September 14.

His chances of gaining approval appear good; the two ministers who had voiced the principal opposition to signing dropped their objections yesterday.

The waning of rightist opposition has resulted from several days of adroit maneuvering on Souvanna's part. [REDACTED]

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Souvanna arranged two meetings between Lao Army generals and Pathet Lao representatives to discuss the military portion of the protocol. Although the meetings produced no substantive Communist concessions, they seem to have allayed the generals' apprehensions about Communist interpretations of the agreement. One of Souvanna's most vocal military critics, Army Deputy Commander in Chief General Kouprasith, and several other influential officers have now pledged their support to the Prime Minister.

During the course of seven months of negotiations, Souvanna has been close to signing several times but was forced to back down at the last moment. This could happen again, but the odds for signing are better this time.

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NORTH VIETNAM

Hanoi apparently began a substantial military recruitment campaign in August which, if past patterns are followed, will continue through this month.

Recent North Vietnamese propaganda has reminded the population that military conscription must continue "in peacetime," as well as "in wartime or emergency cases." More conscription messages were noted in North Vietnamese civil communications during August than in all of the previous six months. The total is comparable to that of January 1973, when Hanoi completed its large winter induction cycle. After January, most young men reaching draft age apparently were assigned to civilian reconstruction jobs.

The extent and duration of the current conscription drive could provide some indication of Hanoi's intentions in South Vietnam for the next dry season, which runs from October to May. If a heavy pace of inductions is continued during September, it will provide Hanoi with a large pool of manpower which could be ready for infiltration as early as November. Allowing for time to travel south and for integration into existing forces, these troops could be committed to combat around the turn of the year.

If conscription tapers off in September, however, it would mean a relatively small induction drive. This, coming on the heels of unusually small recruitment campaigns in the spring and summer, would suggest that Hanoi has no plans for large-scale fighting in the first few months of 1974.

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CHILE

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Plans by navy officers to trigger military action against the Allende government are supported by some key army units.

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The navy is also counting on help from the air force and the national police.

Although military officers are increasingly determined to restore political and economic order, they may still lack an effectively coordinated plan that would capitalize on the widespread civilian opposition.

Socialists, leftist extremists, and Communists are equally determined not to compromise. They are gambling that the military and political opposition cannot carry out moves to oust the government or even to impose restraints on it. President Allende, for his part, still hopes that temporizing will fend off a showdown.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**USSR**

After more than six years of work, the Soviet Union's Ryad program to develop a series of third-generation computers is at least three years behind schedule, and large-scale production is not likely for several years. The Soviet goal apparently had been to produce 3,000-5,000 Ryads per year by 1975. Only a few hundred machines actually will be produced by then.

As a result, the Soviets have abandoned plans to phase out production of the Minsk-32--an obsolete second-generation computer. The Minsk-32 will be the foundation of the automated management systems to be set up during 1973-75.

By modeling Ryad computers after the IBM-360 series, the Soviets had hoped to save both time and money and make use of the large stock of IBM software. The program has been hampered by shortages of high-quality components, out-of-date production and testing techniques, and ineffective direction and coordination.

Western help will be critical in determining how fast the Soviet Union can mass-produce reliable Ryad models. The US, France, the UK, and Japan already have supplied machinery and technology to manufacture key Ryad components. Moscow now is seeking to purchase complete automated plants for the manufacture of key components, such as integrated circuits and disc drives.

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NOTES

Iceland: The cabinet probably will approve resolutions today calling for a review of Icelandic participation in NATO and--in the event of further incidents at sea--a break in diplomatic relations with London. The hardened attitude toward the British stems from recent rammings--one resulting in the death of an Icelandic seaman--and British reconnaissance flights over the disputed fishing area. Growing tensions and the resultant public pressure in Iceland may make compromise difficult in negotiations later this month on retention of US forces at the Keflavik base.

China: Officials of the China National Textile Import and Export Corporation have indicated they expect the US to become Peking's major cotton supplier. Representatives of at least three major US cotton exporters have either traveled or been invited to China in recent weeks to negotiate sales of cotton from the 1974/75 and 1975/76 crops. The Chinese have so far purchased about one-eighth of the amount committed for export from the 1973/74 crop and would like to buy more. Regular sales of large quantities to China would require an expansion of US cotton acreage and ginning capacity.

Norway: The returns in Norway's two-day election are so scattered that a permanent stable government may be difficult to achieve. Although it lost some seats, the Labor Party, Norway's largest, is still the best bet to form a government either alone or in coalition with the Socialist Electoral Alliance--the Communist Party, the Socialist People's Party, and the anti-EC Laborites. Even if the final tally should give the non-socialists a majority, it is doubtful that this diverse group could cooperate to form a government.

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